

CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY

Council of the Faculty of Engineering and Computer Science

Minutes of Meeting 98-3

Held

Thursday, 9 April, 1998 at 2:00 p.m. in H-769

Present: Dr. N. Esmail (Chair); Dr. M.O. Ahmad; Dr. S.T. Alkass;
Dr. J.W. Atwood; Dr. R. Bhat; Ms. C. Chan; Dr. T. Fancott;
Dr. D.J. Ford; Dr. C. Giguère; Dr. G. Gouw; Dr. F. Haghighat;
Dr. A.M. Hanna; Dr. L. Harris; Dr. J. Hayes; Mr. D. Hinton;
Dr. V.S. Hoa; Dr. J. Jans; Dr. A. Krzyzak; Dr. C. Lam;
Ms. A. Lappos; Dr. H.F. Li; Dr. O. Moselhi; Ms. J. Narain;
Dr. T. Stathopoulos; Dr. J. Svoboda; Dr. C. Trueman;
Dr. G. Vatistas

Regrets: Dr. A. Athienitis; Dr. E.I. Plotkin

Guests: Dr. D. Taddeo; Ms. C. Mota

1. Adoption of Agenda

Motion 98-03-01 The agenda was unanimously adopted (G. Gouw, T. Stathopoulos).

2. Adoption of Minutes

Motion 98-03-02 The Minutes of Meeting 98-2 (20 March 1998) were unanimously adopted (T. Stathopoulos, C. Lam).

3. Chair's Remarks

The Chair informed the Council that the Dean's Office is very busy working on numerous issues.

On Wednesday, April 8th, a Faculty delegation made up of the Dean, Dr. T. Fancott, Dr. C. Giguère, Ms. C. Paradisis and Mr. M. Lennane visited CAE. Dr. D. Taddeo from the Capital Campaign accompanied the delegation. The meeting included discussions on the Software Engineering curriculum and possible cooperation in teaching of this program. Another subject discussed was the co-op program between Concordia and Egyptian universities whereby the students would study at Concordia and work at

Discussion ensued as to how the Council would produce the report.

Dr. Fancott suggested that each department appoint a writer to produce a one or two page report which will be sent to the Dean's Office. The four reports will be reviewed at the Council meeting of May 22, and a final position on this document will be sent to the Provost.

Dr. Lam pointed out to the Council that an English version of the document exists.

Dr. Hoa stated that he has received an English copy of the document and will make it available to the Secretary for copying and distribution to Council members.

The Chair stressed the importance of formulating a common position on this document and stated that the departments must forward the reports to his office within three weeks, to allow time for distribution and study for the next Council meeting.

Dr. Giguère pointed to the existence of another document titled "Commission des universités sur les programmes". This document deals with Engineering in Québec universities. He pointed out that the Council will likely have to review and formulate a position on this document as well.

Dr. Giguère pointed out that the Chairs have been given copies of this document and suggested that they distribute this document to the faculty.

Dr. Fancott said that he has a similar document relating to Computer Science. He has passed this document to Dr. Lam for review. According to this document, Concordia is the only university in Québec experiencing immense admission pressure for the Computer Science Programs. He stated that Concordia's response to this document will be very important as it will be the only department making recommendations for dramatic increases in government financing of this field. This recommendation will likely not be supported by the other universities, which are not facing the same admission pressures.

Dr. Lam stated that he has seen the report and that Concordia's position in terms of admission pressures is unique in Québec. He pointed out that Concordia is top in selectivity in terms of numbers/acceptance. This year applications have increased by 100. He pointed out that 66% of students offered acceptance by Concordia come to the program and the provincial average is less than 50%.

Dr. Stathopoulos suggested that the Computer Science document also be copied and circulated to the Council members.

Dr. Lam spoke about an item in the document, which mentions the need to develop formal criteria and formal mechanism in evaluating Québec university system networks. He pointed out that last year a motion was passed by the Council to develop some sort of formal criteria to evaluate the departments within the Faculty and to his knowledge this has yet to be completed.

Dr. Lam said that there are indications in the document that seem to suggest separation into teaching and research universities. He said that you cannot have strong teaching without research.

The Chair agreed and stated that research feeds into teaching.

Dr. Atwood stated that teaching universities already exist in the form of CEGEPs.

Dr. Vatistas states that the two cannot be separated. Effective teaching must generate knowledge and knowledge generates research.

Dr. Hayes pointed that knowledge is not static, it must be used and research is away of developing knowledge.

Dr. Moselhi spoke of the idea of complementary in the document. He said this is essentially an inter-disciplinary approach, which is already practiced amongst the various departments in the Faculty.

Dr. Stathopoulos said that some universities have abused the equilibrium between research and teaching. Some professors have misunderstood their role and have gone too far in one direction. He said that this document provides the professors with the opportunity for self-evaluation and self-criticism.

The chair closed the discussion on the document by giving his views. The University, as known over the past 400 years, is an elitist organization that thrives on excellence, and prides itself on having the best minds. Democracy has swept through society in an unprecedented way; our society is at the highest degree of democratization in probably the history of humankind. Democracy swept through university doors in the sixties. Internal academic organizations have become extremely more democratic than before. Universities in the highly democratized society are asked to devote their energies to societal needs now. This conflicts with academic autonomy, freedom of pursuits, and the notion that universities know and don't need to be told. The chair views the new document as one step in a

continuous process where governments have taken the lead in demanding that universities devote their primary energy to the immediate needs of society.

Personally, the chair is looking forward to the time in the future when universities will turn the tables around and retake the higher moral ground as society's moral and intellectual voice.

6. Proposed Student Charter of Rights

The Chair began discussion on the Proposed Student Charter of Rights by giving some background information on the document. He stated that this document was tabled at Senate on the 6th February 1998. The Senate Steering Committee is soliciting input to this document from the various Faculty Councils. A response is needed before the next Steering Committee Meeting of April 28th.

Mr. Hinton said that a similar document was presented to the Senate two years ago but it was refused. He stated that this is a reworked document, which is trying to incorporate all student rights and responsibilities. He emphasized the importance of the Faculty's participation in accepting this document or making recommendations for changes and formulating reasons for these changes.

Dr. Jans pointed out that in the past recommendations were made that certain clauses be removed from the document. These recommendations were ignored.

Ms. Lappos emphasized the importance of the Faculty's participation in evaluating the document and making recommendations.

Dr. Li affirmed that the Computer Science Department had discussed this document and a motion was unanimously passed stating that this document was not acceptable in its present form. Dr. Li stated that there were concerns about certain clauses. He feels this document should be discussed and elaborated by suitable bodies within the University community rather than Faculty Councils. He said that this document contains contradictions and duplications, which must be dealt with.

Dr. Vatistas inquired as to the origins of the document.

Mr. Hinton stated that this is a Concordia document based on research from other universities. He also stated that the aim of this document is to put all the information in one place. This document is not meant to

supercede other documents. He urged the Council to be specific in its objections so that these objections could be dealt with.

Dr. Vatistas pointed out that a good part of this document is already part of university policy. He stated that students have rights and responsibilities but these rights and responsibilities must not infringe on the rights of the professors. He suggested that the document be re-written in a positive way to eliminate some rough edges.

Mr. Hinton replied that the students understand that freedom does not mean infringing on other people's rights.

Dr. Gouw suggested that the existing Charter be amended rather than formulating another document.

Dr. Fancott felt that this document would be more constructive if it included what was already covered by the Code of Rights and Responsibilities rather than just alluding to them. New items should be emphasized and any overlaps must be eliminated.

Dr. Vatistas stated that in his view the Council is in favour of this document in principle but concerns about details exist. He emphasized that the general thrust of this document is acceptable.

Dr. Moselhi stressed that this document is not acceptable in any form because of redundancy and overlap. Documents exist which address student needs and if changes are needed additions or deletions to the existing documents are possible.

A motion was presented.

Motion
98-03-03

The document "Proposed Student Charter of Rights" in its present form, is considered unacceptable to the Council. (O. Moselhi, D.J. Ford)

Vote: carried unanimously

Mr. Hinton requested that a copy of the discussion relating to the motion be included with the motion being forwarded to Senate.

7.

Request from the Centre for Mature Students

The Chair stated that the Centre for Mature Students had filed a request for an observer to sit at the ENCS Faculty Council.

Discussion ensued.

A motion was presented.

Motion
98-03-04

The Council invites the Centre for Mature Students to appoint an observer to the ENCS Faculty Council. (C. Giguère, O. Moselhi)

Vote: carried unanimously

8. Other

There was no other business.

9. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:20 p.m.